

Message Text

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PAGE 01 COPENH 01035 180748Z
ACTION ARA-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L COPENHAGEN 1035

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, US, CU, DA
SUBJ: CUBAN CHARGE ADVOCATES NORMALIZATION OF US-CUBAN RELATIONS

1. AT THE QUEEN'S ANNUAL RECEPTION EVENING OF FEB 16, THE CUBAN RESIDENT CHARGE D'AFFAIRES WENT OUT OF HIS WAY TO ENGAGE ME IN A LONG SUBSTANTIVE CONVERSATION ABOUT CUBAN-AMERICAN RELATIONS. THIS CUBAN INITIATIVE DID NOT GO UNNOTICED BY THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS WHO WATCHED FROM A DISTANCE OUR TEN MINUTE CONVERSATION.

2. AFTER AN EXCHANGE OF AMENTITIES CHARGE JOSE FERNANDEZ ROQUEIRO ASKED WHETHER I HAD READ OR HEARD ABOUT BILL MOYERS' INTERVIEW WITH FIDEL CASTRO. HE ALSO INQUIRED WHETHER I HAD SEEN ANOTHER FIDEL CASTRO INTERVIEW WHICH APPEARS ON SWEDISH TELEVISION ABOUT TEN DAYS AGO. FINALLY, HE ASKED WHETHER I HAD RECEIVED WORD ABOUT CONGRESSMAN JONATHAN BINGHAM'S TRIP TO CUBA EARLIER THIS MONTH.

3. WITHOUT WAITING FOR A REPLY, THE CUBAN CHARGE WENT INTO A LONG EXPPOSITION OF THE NEED FOR AMERICA AND CUBA TO NORMALIZE THEIR RELATIONS, THAT THIS WAS IN OUR MUTUAL INTERESTS AND, ABOVE ALL, THAT THE CUBAN PEOPLE INTERPRETED PRESIDENT CARTER'S ELECTION AS A FIRST-
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 COPENH 01035 180748Z

STEP IN THE PROCESS OF NORMALIZATION. HE CONTINUED BY SAYING THAT CUBANS HOPE THAT THE NEW ADMINISTRATION IN WASHINGTON WILL FIND A WAY OF MOVING TOWARD A NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH CUBA.

4. I REPLIED THAT I HAD SEEN THE CASTRO INTERVIEW ON SWEDISH TELEVISION AND ALSO HAD READ EXCERPTS OF

BILL MOYERS' INTERVIEW TAPED IN HAVANA AND THAT I WAS AWARE OF CONGRESSMAN BINGHAM'S VISIT TO CUBA. AS FOR THE OVERALL SUBJECT OF US-CUBAN RELATIONS, I SAID I HAD NOTED SECRETARY VANCE'S STATEMENT OF FEB 3 IN WHICH HE INDICATED THAT IT IS APPROPRIATE FOR THE US TO SEEK NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH ALL COUNTRIES, BUT THAT ALL COUNTRIES MUST BE WILLING TO LIVE WITHIN THE RULES AND SYSTEMS AMONG NATIONS.

3. COMMENT: THE INTERESTING FACTOR IS THAT HERETOFORE THE CUBAN DIPLOMAT HAD CAREFULLY AVOIDED ANY CONTACT WITH ME. FOR EXAMPLE, AT THE PERIODIC MEETINGS OF CHIEFS OF MISSION FROM THE AMERICAS, THE CUBAN REPRESENTATIVE POINTEDLY STAYED AWAY FROM ME. YESTERDAY'S INITIATIVE APPEARS TO ME NOT TO HAVE BEEN A COINCIDENCE. I AM PASSING THIS INFORMATION TO THE DEPT IN THE EVENT THAT COLLEAGUES AT OTHER POSTS HAVE HAD SIMILAR EXPERIENCES, WHICH COULD THEN INDICATE A TREND INITIATED BY HAVANA.
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